



Through the Federal Power Act, National Park Service recommends provisions to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to mitigate and enhance conservation and recreation resources associated with licensing dams.

Ames Hydroelectric Project, Colorado

Historic Powerhouse and Recreation Issues Covered

The Ames Hydroelectric Project is located on the Howards Fork of the San Miguel River in southwestern Colorado. The powerhouse, which is located approximately nine miles from the town of Telluride, was the first hydroelectric project in the world to generate, transmit, and provide alternating current (AC) electricity on a scale for industrial use. Surrounded by private land and the Uncompahgre National Forest, the relicensing process involves many interested parties. In order to gather the necessary input, Public Service Company of Colorado (PSCo) decided to use the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's new Integrated Licensing Process (ILP).

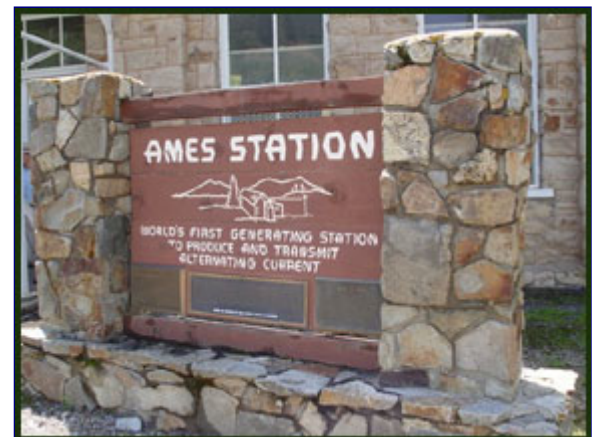
Assessing Recreational Uses and Historic Resources

The relicensing process for the Ames project began in September of 2004 with an orientation meeting and site visit. Since then, four Resource Working Groups (RWGs) have been discussing the wide variety of issues to be addressed. The RWGs include one panel that is looking into land use and recreational issues. It is on this panel that NPS recommendations are being made. The NPS is also contributing to the panel addressing impacts on cultural resources.

The RWGs have worked with PSCo and their consultants to develop study plans which include assessing the recreational resources within the project boundaries to determine their level of accessibility for all users. A shoreline and recreation management plan will be developed for Trout Lake, a popular reservoir associated with the Ames Powerhouse. A cultural resources assessment will also be carried out for the facilities and other sites within the project area. The study plans should be completed in 2008, followed by recommendations for the operation of the project.



Colorado mountains near Ames project



*Sign at historic Ames Powerhouse,
photo courtesy of Public Service Co. of Colorado*

National Park Service input has been especially helpful in designing study plans to effectively address the recreation and accessibility issues in this project.

John Devine, President and CEO, Devine Tarbell & Associates

National Park Service provides technical assistance on recreation and conservation issues to all participants in Hydropower Licensing Proceedings of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. NPS makes recommendations on recreation access and facilities, instream flows for recreation, and protection for riparian corridors and conservation buffer zones. More information on Hydropower Assistance at <http://www.nps.gov/nrcr/programs/hydro/>

For more information about National Park Service project involvement, contact Hugh Osborne, hugh_osborne@nps.gov.